

## **AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Canceled) A method of identifying a plurality of mailpieces in a mailpiece sorting system, using identification codes corresponding to identification files, comprising the steps of:

marking one of the plurality of mailpieces with an identification code that uniquely corresponds to the one mailpiece on the back of the one mailpiece;

creating an identification file uniquely corresponding to the identification code and the one mailpiece, where the identification file may be accessed from a plurality of nodes on the mailpiece sorting system; and

using the identification code read from the mailpiece to retrieve identification information from the corresponding identification file at a plurality of nodes on the mailpiece sorting system.

2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[1]] 37, wherein the identification code comprises a start code.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[1]] 37, wherein the identification code comprises a class of mail code.

4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[1]] 37, wherein the identification code comprises an origin optical character reader code.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[1]] 37, wherein the identification code comprises a date code.

6. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[1]] 37, wherein the identification code comprises a time code.

7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[1]] 37, wherein the identification code comprises a mailpiece sequence code.

8. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[1]] 37, wherein the identification code comprises a stop code.

9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[1]] 37, wherein the identification code comprises:

- a start code;
- a class of mail code;
- an origin optical character reader code;
- a date code;
- a time code;
- a mailpiece sequence code; and
- a stop code.

10. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[1]] 37, wherein the identification file comprises the identification code.

11. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[1]] 37, wherein the identification file comprises a postal code.

12. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[1]] 37, wherein the identification file comprises an image capture time.

13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[1]] 37, wherein the identification file comprises a plurality of status bits that indicate aspects of the identification file.

14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim [[1]] 37, wherein the identification file comprises:

- the identification code; and
- a postal code.

15. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein the postal code is a POSTNET code.

16. (Original) The method of claim 14, wherein the postal code is a POSTNET code.

17. (Currently Amended) The method of claim ~~[[1]]~~ 37, further comprising the step of:

using the identification code read from the mailpiece to retrieve identification information from the corresponding identification file at any node on the mailpiece sorting system.

18. (Canceled) A system for identifying a plurality of mailpieces in a mailpiece sorting system, using identification codes corresponding to identification files, comprising:

a marking component configured to mark one of the plurality of mailpieces with an identification code that uniquely corresponds to the one mailpiece on the back of the one mailpiece;

a creating component configured to create an identification file uniquely corresponding to the identification code and the one mailpiece, where the identification file may be accessed from a plurality of nodes on the mailpiece sorting system; and

a using component configured to use the identification code read from the mailpiece to retrieve identification information from the corresponding identification file at a plurality of nodes on the mailpiece sorting system.

19. (Currently Amended) The system of claim ~~[[18]]~~ 38, wherein the identification code comprises a start code.

20. (Currently Amended) The system of claim ~~[[18]]~~ 38, wherein the identification code comprises a class of mail code.

21. (Currently Amended) The system of claim ~~[[18]]~~ 38, wherein the identification code comprises an origin optical character reader code.

22. (Currently Amended) The system of claim ~~[[18]]~~ 38, wherein the identification code comprises a date code.

23. (Currently Amended) The system of claim ~~[[18]] 38~~, wherein the identification code comprises a time code.

24. (Currently Amended) The system of claim ~~[[18]] 38~~, wherein the identification code comprises a mailpiece sequence code.

25. (Currently Amended) The system of claim ~~[[18]] 38~~, wherein the identification code comprises a stop code.

26. (Currently Amended) The system of claim ~~[[18]] 38~~, wherein the identification code comprises:

- a start code;
- a class of mail code;
- an origin optical character reader code;
- a date code;
- a time code;
- a mailpiece sequence code; and
- a stop code.

27. (Currently Amended) The system of claim ~~[[18]] 38~~, wherein the identification file comprises the identification code.

28. (Currently Amended) The system of claim ~~[[18]] 38~~, wherein the identification file comprises a postal code.

29. (Currently Amended) The system of claim ~~[[18]] 38~~, wherein the identification file comprises an image capture time.

30. (Currently Amended) The system of claim ~~[[18]] 38~~, wherein the identification file comprises a plurality of status bits that indicate aspects of the identification file.

31. (Currently Amended) The system of claim ~~[[18]] 38~~, wherein the identification file comprises:

- the identification code; and

a postal code.

32. (Original) The system of claim 28, wherein the postal code is a POSTNET code.

33. (Original) The system of claim 31, wherein the postal code is a POSTNET code.

34. (Currently Amended) The system of claim ~~[[18]]~~ 38, wherein the using component further comprises:

an any node using component configured to use the identification code read from the mailpiece to retrieve identification information from the corresponding identification file at any node on the mailpiece sorting system.

35. (Canceled) A system for identifying a plurality of mailpieces in a mailpiece sorting system, using identification codes corresponding to identification files, comprising:

means for marking one of the plurality of mailpieces with an identification code that uniquely corresponds to the one mailpiece on the back of the one mailpiece;

means for creating an identification file uniquely corresponding to the identification code and the one mailpiece, where the identification file may be accessed from a plurality of nodes on the mailpiece sorting system; and

means for using the identification code read from the mailpiece to retrieve identification information from the corresponding identification file at any node on the mailpiece sorting system.

36. (Canceled) A computer usable medium having computer readable code embodied therein for identifying a plurality of mailpieces in a mailpiece sorting system, the computer readable code comprising:

a marking module configured to mark one of the plurality of mailpieces with an identification code that uniquely corresponds to the one mailpiece on the back of the one mailpiece;

a creating module configured to create an identification file uniquely corresponding to the identification code and the one mailpiece, where the identification file may be accessed from a plurality of nodes on the mailpiece sorting system; and

a using module configured to use the identification code read from the mailpiece to retrieve identification information from the corresponding identification file at any node on the mailpiece sorting system.

37. (New) A method of identifying a plurality of mailpieces in a mailpiece sorting system, using identification codes corresponding to identification files, comprising the steps of:

marking one of the plurality of mailpieces with an identification code that uniquely corresponds to the one mailpiece;

creating an identification file corresponding to the identification code, where the identification file is read from the envelope by a plurality of nodes on the mailpiece sorting system including at least one node on a sorting system of a receiving post office and at least one node on a sorting system of a destination post office; and

using the identification code read from the mailpiece to retrieve information from the corresponding identification file for sorting the mailpiece at a plurality of nodes on the mailpiece sorting system including at least one node on the sorting system of the receiving post office.

38. (New) A system for identifying a plurality of mailpieces in a mailpiece sorting system, using identification codes corresponding to identification files, comprising:

a marking component configured to mark one of the plurality of mailpieces with an identification code that uniquely corresponds to the one mailpiece;

a creating component configured to create an identification file corresponding to the identification code, where the identification file is read from a plurality of nodes on the mailpiece sorting system including at least one node on a sorting system of a receiving post office and at least one node on a sorting system of a destination post office; and

a using component configured to use the identification code read from the mailpiece to retrieve identification information from the corresponding identification file for sorting the mailpiece at a plurality of nodes on the mailpiece sorting system including at least one node on the sorting system of the receiving post office.

39. (New) A system for identifying a plurality of mailpieces in a mailpiece sorting system, using identification codes corresponding to identification files, comprising:

means for marking one of the plurality of mailpieces with an identification code that uniquely corresponds to the one mailpiece;

means for creating an identification file corresponding to the identification code, where the identification file is read from a plurality of nodes on the mailpiece sorting system including at least one node on a sorting system of a receiving post office and at least one node on a sorting system of a destination post office; and

means for using the identification code read from the mailpiece to retrieve identification information from the corresponding identification file for sorting the mailpiece at a plurality of nodes on the mailpiece sorting system including at least one node on the sorting system of the receiving post office.

40. (New) A computer usable medium having computer readable code embodied therein for identifying a plurality of mailpieces in a mailpiece sorting system, the computer readable code comprising:

a marking module configured to mark one of the plurality of mailpieces with an identification code that uniquely corresponds to the one mailpiece;

a creating module configured to create an identification file corresponding to the identification code, where the identification file may be accessed from a plurality of nodes on the mailpiece sorting system including at least one node on a sorting system of a receiving post office and at least one node on a sorting system of a destination post office; and

a using module configured to use the identification code read from the mailpiece to retrieve identification information from the corresponding identification file for sorting

the mailpiece at a plurality of nodes on the mailpiece sorting system including at least one node on the sorting system of the receiving post office.